The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news summaries and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor according to the interests, hopes, aims and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 MILLION DOLLARS
IN WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1764 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 1945 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 35, NO. 5

AFL Sweeps NLRB Elections Of Western Union Employes

Wins Six Districts With Majority of Two to One Over Rival CIO

Washington, D. C.—The AFL scored almost a clean sweep in the nation-wide NLRB elections among Western Union workers.

Triumphant in six of the seven regional districts set up for balloting purposes by the NLRB, the AFL won bargaining rights for Western Union employes in the country except the group in the metropolitan area of New York.

The total vote in all districts throughout the nation gave the AFL almost a two-to one majority. It was:

AFL—20,063.

CIO—10,634.

Commenting on the results, AFL President William Green declared:

"By an overwhelming margin, the workers of the Western Union Company registered their preference for the American Federation of Labor over the rival CIO union.

"Only the device of holding seven regional elections, decided upon by the National Labor Relations Board out of partiality for the CIO, prevented a complete victory for the AFL. The Board saved the New York district for the CIO but I predict that will be only temporary. I am confident that eventually all Western Union workers will be represented by the American Federation of Labor."

Four AFL unions participated in the election victory—the Commercial Telegraphers Union, two Federal Labor unions and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. They had previously signed contractual agreements.

The election was made necessary by the merger of Postal Telegraph with Western Union. Previously, the AFL had represented Western Union workers in most areas, while the CIO had gained a foothold in Postal.

The election was the most extensive in NLRB history, although the number of workers participating did not score a new record. Balloting results by districts follow:

In the Eastern district, including the New England States, the balance of New York and New Jersey not in the home office or metropolitan New York district, western shore line of Virginia, District of Columbia, Maryland, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, the results were:

AFL, 3,953; CIO, 1,889.

The Lake district showed a better than 2-to-1 plurality for the AFL. This district includes Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska and North and South Dakota. The tabulation was:

AFL, 5,244; CIO, 2,264.

In the Gulf area, which included Texas, Kansas, Missouri, Colorado, Louisiana, Arkansas, New Mexico and Oklahoma, the results were:

AFL, 3,745; CIO, 1,203.

In the Southern division, embracing Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky and Tennessee, the results were:

AFL, 3,260; CIO, 866.

In the New York home office, the results were:

AFL, 176; CIO, 49.

In the metropolitan New York district, including Greater New York City, Long Island, Bayonne, Union City, Jersey City, Hoboken and certain employes at Newark, the results were:

AFL, 1,333; CIO, 2,969.

Results in the Pacific division, embracing Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Wyoming, Utah and Arizona, were:

AFL, 2,374; CIO, 1,304.

MILK DRIVERS' SALESMANSHIP SCORES IN WAR BOND DRIVE

Los Angeles.—Milk Drivers & Dairy Employes Union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, with a membership of 4,000, sold $2,500,000 worth of war bonds. The includes both purchases by union members and sales by drivers not on the payroll.

One union member, Lester Flagg of Golden State Dairy, sold $67,500 alone. One of the smallest dairies, Edgemar, with only 41 routes, sold $150,000 worth of bonds, an average of about $4,000 a route.

STRONG PROGRAM PUSHED BY AFL IN CONNECTICUT

Hartford, Conn.—The Connecticut State Legislature now has before it a proposal for enactment of a State Labor Relations Act and the sponsorship of this bill guarantees its soundness.

It was introduced in the upper house by Sen. William S. Allyn, President of the Hartford Central Labor Union, and in the lower house by Rep. Alfie Ullman, past, recording secretary of the Norwich Central Labor Union.

Other items on the AFL's legislative program in the state include improvements in the workmen's compensation and unemployment compensation laws; a higher minimum wage rate; a bill bettering conditions for women and minors in industry, and a measure guaranteeing prevailing wage standards for employes of state agencies.

"So What," Says Watt, About Absence Of Soviet Russia From ILO Parley

London, England.—Soviet Russia's absence from the ILO meeting here is her own fault, Robert J. Watt, American Workers' Delegate and International representative of the AFL, told the conferees.

Deploring the concern of a few other delegates over the missing Russians, Watt said, "So what!"

He pointed out that more than a year ago the ILO Governing Body invited Russia to join and got the cold shoulder. He added:

"If, after proper courtship and assurance that nothing but peaceful persuasion was used, the lady still refuses to participate, then the answer in the words of the American worker is—'So what!'"

Earlier, the meeting was addressed by Ernest Bevin, British Labor Minister, who hinted that the ILO must play a prominent role in world peace settlements.

Mr. Bevin laid down the dictum that the ILO "must not be put in a subordinate position to the Economic and Social Council" to be set up as a result of the Dumbarton Oaks meeting.

He emphasized that the ILO "must work on parallel lines" with other organizations that may be related to the new world peace.

The British Cabinet official also stressed the need for having the ILO carry on its work directly with the various governments, as at present, and not be forced to carry on its affairs through an intermediary body. Both observations cheered the members of the conference, who took this as the future relations of the ILO with the new world peace body were not formulated at the Dumbarton Oaks meeting.

Housing—Need For A Unified Program

By HARRY C. BATES
Chairman AFL Housing Committee

(We present herewith the second of a series of articles by Mr. Bates, President of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' Union, on the housing problems with which he is expertly familiar.)

Provision of good homes is a responsibility which rests primarily on the local community. What kind of a place the city, town or village is to be is for the people of that city, town or village to decide. At the same time, there is no longer any doubt that the rebuilding of America after the war is a task which local communities cannot undertake alone. They will need guidance and aid.

The effort of any city to clean up its bad housing and make it a better place to live is doomed to failure if shanty towns, slums and blight are permitted to spread just outside its city limits. Construction standards must be made uniform, and rebuilding plans must be integrated through a concerted effort of local governments of all jurisdictions in the area. City limits, municipal boundaries or county lines must not become barriers to comprehensive and well-planned development of metropolitan areas, including all suburban sections surrounding the city proper. To effect cooperative arrangements among local governments is a responsibility which state governments must not only share, but also lead.

As the transition from war to peace the share of the responsibility of the federal government is of special strategic importance. Our studies, conducted during the past year, show that demobilization of war industries and of the armed forces is bound to result in mass shifts of population. These new migrations will profoundly affect a great many communities. Under the stress of new dislocations, hundreds of communities large and small and a number of whole areas will become distress areas of the nation. An concerted effort is imperatively needed to prevent this distress and remedy these situations with the aid of the national government.

No housing plans can be sound unless they are intimately related to the employment plans of the entire country. Free finding, planning and programming of housing after the war will not meet the essential post-war goals unless the federal government is fully equipped to keep it currently information to the communities and to all groups concerned. Failure to have information not dealing with housing alone, but related to all factors of employment and production, will hamper the formulation of an accomplishly sound housing program. In the past, federal agencies have rendered valuable assistance in the form of mortgage insurance of the FHA for which the housing institutions and home buyers under the HOLC and aid to refinancing of home owners under the USHA. The author believes that these services, indispensable to the solution of the nation's housing problems, should be strengthened and supplemented by further aids and services.

We urge that provision be made for federal grants to individual communities for local market surveys and project planning. Information of this kind should also be provided to local communities to enable them to learn from the experience of others and to attain a high standard of performance. It is also extremely important that a large reserves of positive financial aid be extended to local communities in the work of urban redevelopment. Help and guidance in planning such redevelopment should also be given. The federal government can also do much in assisting in the development of mutual home ownership and in securing sound financing and administration of mutual home ownership projects. The bank condition of all federal assistance should be the requirement of full compliance with minimum standards to be prescribed as fundamental to a sound national housing policy.

To fulfill this responsibility of the federal government, we propose that the creation of a permanent statutory National Housing Board under which all activities of the several federal housing agencies should be unified. We propose that the National Housing Board be made responsible for over-all policy, consist of 5 members: the chairman, to act as the administrator; 1 member to represent federal agencies responsible for private housing; 1 member to represent the public housing agencies of the government; 1 member to be drawn from private business; and 1 member to represent labor. We believe that labor representation should be assured in the policy and operating functions of the board and of its constituent agencies.

Another important consideration should prompt Congress to provide without delay a statutory basis for a unified housing administration. It is extremely important that the nation's post-war housing program be continued and extended as one, comprehensive, unified program for the entire nation. Our country's ability to avoid a major economic crisis in the years after the war, to escape the recurrence of mass unemployment and of widespread business and economic distress, depends so heavily on the rapid and sustained building into full-scale housing program that the creation of an aggressive and effective agency to guide and further such a program becomes a primary requirement of American strategy for peace.

The idea of unified policy, a policy which would make sure that we attack the enormous housing need from all sides and with all available weapons, is fundamental to the effectiveness of our post-war housing program and essential to its success. There is an acute and widespread housing shortage throughout the land. The physical need for shelter, for the provision of homes, is not a need confined to particular section of the country, a particular class of property, or a particular income group. This need cuts clear across our entire community. It can only be met through a closely-knit, inter-related set of positive measures. The post-war housing market must be looked upon as a universal housing market. It is a market in which families of all income must participate. Unless we mobilize every available instrumentality of enterprise and competition, and bring to bear upon it a comprehensive framework of a unified long-range plan, we will fail utterly in our entire peacetime endeavor to achieve full employment. Unless we have a long-range plan, we will fall up with the government to carry out such a plan, we will likewise fail in our effort of post-war reconstruction and redevelopment.

(The third article in this series will appear next week).

STRIKE LOSSES REDUCED ONE-THIRD LAST YEAR

Washington, D. C.—Time lost due to strikes in 1944 was reduced one-third from strike losses in 1943, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced.

The bureau calculated that idleness resulting from last year's work stoppages amounted to only one-tenth of one per cent of time worked.

In December, the bureau reported, there were only 280 small strikes of short duration, involving about 85,000 workers. The time lost during the month represented one-seventh of one per cent of working time.

STATE TREND NOW FRIENDLY TO LABOR

Washington, D. C.—The labor situation on state legislative fronts looks far more encouraging than was anticipated.

In only a few of the 44 State Legislatures due to meet this year have anti-labor measures been introduced. Even more heartening is the fact that many governors, in their messages to the States Legislatures, have condemned sniping at labor's freedoms and have expressed friendly attitudes toward the trade union movement.

For example, in California, Governor Earl Warren called upon the legislature to avoid any legislation "that might stir up animosity between labor and management."

"In time of war I consider such a policy vital," he said. "In time of peace I consider it no less important. Repressive legislation in this field will never be the answer to our problems."

Similarly, in Pennsylvania, Governor Edward Martin, praised labor and followed up with recommendations for increased unemployment compensation; more liberal accident compensation; higher appropriations for mine and safety inspections; state-fostered low-cost housing and other forward-looking measures.

Ohio's new Governor Frank Lausche declared that "the welfare of any commonwealth is dependent to a most important degree on harmonious relations between agriculture, labor and industry; one cannot prosper without the other."

"The rights of labor must be protected," he said.

Another new governor, Maurice Tobin of Massachusetts, insisted that "the policy of our government should constantly be directed toward a full recognition of the dignity of the man and woman who labors."

However, anti-labor forces are still busy in Texas, Minnesota and Colorado where new legislation designed to hamstring unions has been introduced and where efforts are being made to counteract such decisions which have knocked out previous anti-union measures.

Keenan Returns, Hits Compulsion

Washington, D. C.—WPB Vice Chairman Joseph D. Keenan, just back from a visit to the battle fronts in France, declared he is still opposed to "work or fight" legislation which, he warned, may put production 20 per cent instead of increasing it.

Mr. Keenan said the only shortages he heard about at the front were heavy ammunition and that the Army, he explained, is firing heavy artillery at 5 or 7 times the rate originally planned. There are still large ammunition supplies in England and on the continent but the problem is to transport the supplies to the battle lines. Port facilities still have not been restored and the French railways have been crippled. The result, he said, is that only one-quarter of the motor transport he pointed out, has brought about a great need for more heavy trucks and tires.

Stressing the desirability of increasing production through voluntary methods, Mr. Keenan said:

"We should try to use small concerns that have been cut back. Give them subcontracts for essential war work instead of closing them down and dispersing the workers and then take six months to find new jobs at which they are best qualified. It's more efficient to keep striking plants and the workers who are there—then there are no new problems of transportation and housing."

Mr. Keenan said he found no antipathy among the front line men of soldiers in France. Their chief concern, he said, is to get the war over quickly and return home.

Truman Predicts Jobs For All In AFL Post-War Broadcast

Green, Johnston a[illegible]atton Join Vice President in Pledging Unity

Washington, D. C.—Vice President Harry S. Truman, appearing on the AFL weekly radio program "American United," expressed confidence that full employment will be attained in this country in peace-time industry "within a reasonably short time" after the war ends.

The Vice President made his prediction in response to a question from AFL President William Green on a program devoted to a preview on prospects for the "next four years."

Eric Johnston, President of the United States Chamber of Commerce and James G. Patton, President of the National Farmers Union, also took part in the broadcast.

Vice President Truman emphasized the need for carrying over national unity into the post-war period for the solution of the nation's economic problems. He said:

"The only real danger to national security, in peace as well as in war, lies in the possibility of disunity. As long as we Americans stay united and preserve our cherished democratic ideals, we need fear no future."

Mr. Truman declared the great desire of people throughout the world today is "peace with security." He called for an international organization to safeguard the peace and to settle international disputes on the basis of justice, adding:

"When victory is achieved, it is our determination that there shall be no more wars—that one nation against another. It is our hope—our great hope—that future wars shall be waged only against the common enemies of all mankind—against poverty, ignorance, suffering and disease. If we look at the problem ahead in that light, I think it will be much easier to maintain in the post-war period the high degree of national unity that has made America's war effort so successful.

"The AFL welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with industry, industry and with agriculture for constructive solution of post-war problems.

"We are interested that the No. 1 domestic problem on the post-war list is the attainment of full employment under a free and stable economy. Full employment will bring economic security to the nation's workers; it will assure high production levels to industry, and it will provide an ample domestic market for the future."

Mr. Johnston asked Vice President Truman about the prospects for business expansion in the next four years and received this reply:

"I believe the prospects are very good. There is a tremendous backlog of civilian wants which should provide ample opportunity for business expansion after hostilities cease. Entire new industries may develop out of our wartime research. Private business must be given all possible assistance by the government to insure sound economic expansion for the benefit of all."

Responding, Mr. Johnston said that expansion of industry "will be an absolute necessity" if we are to maintain maximum employment. He agreed "with my friend, Bill Green," that "we must have unity of purpose and effort among the various groups if we are to conquer the problems of the future." The business leader emphasized that the policies of the Government can either encourage or discourage new business enterprise. He pleaded for a cooperative attitude by the Government.

Mr. Patton, answered by Vice President Truman, that the government will protect fair prices for farmers, "will be active—the scoop the better"—on assuring full production and employment. He said:

"We can't afford to take chances again. A new depression might cost us our freedom."

Wartime Problems And Legislation On Agenda Of Executive Council

Washington, D. C.—Grave wartime problems will be accorded first consideration by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor at its annual mid-winter meeting in Miami which begins Feb. 5.

Of special concern to the Federation's leaders is the present manpower "crisis" and the threat of legislation which would be tantamount to a labor draft.

The Council is expected to call upon Congress to reject compulsory national service and to give the War Manpower Commission authority to mobilize manpower for war industries by voluntary methods.

Government officials will report to the Council on the status of the war production program and the "reconversion" output of non-war "critical" items.

Labor's own legislative program will be drafted by the Council at its session. The AFL body is expected to call for immediate enactment of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell amendments to the Social Security Act; for an increase in minimum wage levels by amending the Wage-Hour Act as an aid to low-income and white-dollar workers; and for legislation to provide permanent pay increases to workers in the Government service.

President William Green will report to the Council on the recent visit of an AFL committee to President Roosevelt at which the President was asked to issue an Executive Order adjusting the Little Steel wage formula to meet higher living costs.

Mr. Green will also report by the Council on developments with regard to the suggested reaffiliation of the United Mine Workers Union.

Hats Off To Two More AFL Heroes!

Washington, D. C.—The War Department is making arrangements to present the Silver Star, Army medal, to the parents of Private First Class Billy Miller, AFL member, who thrilled the country a year ago, by singlehandedly enforcing "unconditional surrender" on 19 German soldiers including one officer, who had taken him prisoner in Italy. Six months later, in July, Miller was captured again and is now a prisoner of war camp in Germany. His family will receive the medal for him.

The Germans Miller brought into Allied lines had held him for two days in a cellar. He knew that from all sides so heavy that they could not move. When the time came to move back to the German lines, Miller conceived the plan of persuading the Nazis that American troops were overtaking the area and that they should surrender to him. They gave up their arms, and marched with Miller to his command post. The citation accompanying the medal states: "His courage and ingenuity in such a dangerous situation were outstanding and a distinct credit to the Armed Forces."

Miller has also been honored with the Purple Heart for a wound in combat. Before entering the Army two years ago, at the age of 20, he was employed at Thomas Sperry Marks Baking Company, Peoria, Illinois, and belonged to Local 145, Bakery and Confectionery Workers International Union, AFL.

The War Department also awarded the Silver Star to Private First Class Milton O. Sandberg, member of Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, AFL, and former storeroom laborer for the Northern Pacific Railway in Duluth, Minnesota.

Sandberg won his medal for actions in Normandy, France, on June 10, four days after the invasion. Investigating sounds of a struggle during the night, he found that an enemy patrol had penetrated the Allied lines and was strangling a sentry. Sandberg went to the immediate rescue of the sentry, and although he was wounded in the action he continued resistance, killed one of the enemy, and forced the patrol to withdraw.

In the words of the Army citation: "The courage displayed by this soldier reflects highest credit upon himself and the military service."

Sandberg is the son of Mrs. Ida Sandberg, 922 E. 8th Street, Duluth, Minnesota. His brother, Roger, is employed at the Riverside Shipyard, Duluth, and belongs to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL.

AFL Launches Last-Ditch Campaign To Defeat Forced Labor Proposals

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor threw its entire weight and influence into the fight to forestall Congress from adopting compulsory manpower legislation.

Legislative representatives in Washington from many affiliated unions, working in close cooperation with Chairman William L. Hutcheson of the AFL Legislative Committee, were engaged in constant contact with friends of labor in the House of Representatives where the preliminary battle on "work or fight" legislation is being fought.

At the same time, AFL President William Green appealed to all members of the House to defeat the May bill providing for a labor draft of all men from 18 to 45. In an official letter he suggested to the Congressmen that voluntary methods of manpower mobilization be retained and that authority be given to the War Manpower Commission to effect greater use and utilization of labor in war industries.

Rep. Barrett of Wyoming introduced a bill on Thursday of last week which would put into effect the substance of Mr. Green's recommendations.

While anti-labor groups sought to make it appear that only organized labor was opposing the May bill, business organizations and farm groups were pushing on an active campaign against it along with the trade union movement.

Anti-labor forces attempted to strike a below-the-belt blow by amending the May bill to provide that a worker assigned under the labor draft to take a job in a plant operating under a closed shop contract would not have to join the union. Reactionary Southern Congressmen who loudly accused labor of wanting more power, however, of a counter-measure which would prohibit discrimination because of race or color in the administration of the labor draft.

Testifying before Congress, Mr. Green called the May bill "highly objectionable." He added:

"The manpower problem can be dealt with in a constructive way and solved—not through resort to compulsion and force—but instead through the better utilization of available manpower. There is no shortage of manpower. It is a question of the proper utilization of available manpower. Labor stands willing and ready to cooperate wholeheartedly and completely in every way through constructive planning designed to bring about a full and complete utilization of available manpower. American workers have shown since Pearl Harbor that free, voluntary labor can outproduce forced labor.

"If Congress believes that in view of the critical nature of the present war, it is necessary to make a comprehensive investigation and reappraisal of manpower in the United States, it should confine its activities to such as the War Manpower Commission. The duties of Selective Service boards should be confined to the induction of draftees into the armed forces and the civilian agencies set up should be obligated to deal with the utilization of available manpower. The civilian agencies which have been and are functioning so well could deal with the problem of labor hoarding and labor assignments to war material production plants. They could also deal effectively with critical areas where for various reasons local war manpower shortages exist.

"I respectfully urge that Congress follow this wise and constructive course in the consideration and enactment of legislation relating to war manpower and war manpower problems."

OPA GIVES EXTRA GAS TO MERCHANT MARINE

Washington, D. C.—AFL members of the Office of Defense Transportation succeeded in bringing about an agency ruling which will permit the purchase of extra gasoline by members of the merchant marine on shore leave between ships.

The ruling grants to the Merchant Marine the same consideration which is extended to members of the armed forces who need transportation on leave or furlough for a period of three days or more.

VAN VAERENWYCK DIES AFTER LONG LABOR CAREER

Boston.—John H. Van Vaerenwyck, AFL organizer and former President of the Massachusetts State Federation of Labor, died here Jan. 15. For the past three years he had served as the AFL representative on the War Finance Committee of the Treasury Department and had made a notable record in promoting larger War Bond purchases by union members.

In his long trade-union career, Mr. Van Vaerenwyck had been a member of the Cigar Makers Union for 38 years; President of that organization from 1920 to 1921; Vice President of the State Federation for the five succeeding years and President of the State body for two years. He joined the AFL organizing staff in 1936 and served in that capacity for six years.

Housing Needs Are Tremendous

Washington, D. C.—Housing needs in the United States are tremendous, Senator Robert F. Wagner (D., N. Y.) declared in a speech before the Senate.

Senator Wagner, author of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell social security bill, said that 12,000,000 families are living in substandard dwellings and that 5,000,000 of these families have incomes of less than $1,000 a year.

THE AFL PRESENTS . . .

"AMERICA UNITED"
At 1:15 P.M., EWT, Over NBC

Date	Guest	Topic	Panel Members
Feb. 4	U. S. Senator Pepper	Nation's Health	Nelson Cruikshank, AFL Emerson P. Schmidt, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Albert S. Goss, National Grange
Feb. 11	Secretary of Treasury Morgenthau	Paying For War	Boris Shishkin, AFL Emerson P. Schmidt, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Edward A. O'Neal, Am. Farm Bur. Federation
Feb. 18	Rep. Ramspeck	White Collar Workers	James B. Burns, AFL Emerson P. Schmidt, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Paul Sifton, National Farmers Union